VISVA - BHARATI UNIVERSITY

Department of Philosophy & Comparative Religion

Synopsis of Thesis for Ph.D. Degree

Researcher – Ranjit Shaw

Title of the Ph.D. Thesis: Upamāna Pramāṇa in Classical Indian Tradition : A Critical Study

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Introduction : In Indian epistemology pramāna is an important concept. In Indian Philosophy pramā is appropriate cognition and pramāna is the most effective cause of pramā. ("Pramāyah Karanam Pramānam") karana is a form of Kārana. The word Karana is defined variously by different Indian philosophers. According to Pānini. The most efficient cause is called Kārana. In Nyāya philosophy, uncommon cause (asādhāranakārana) and the cause having an intermediary (vyāpāra) are called Karana. Navya Naiyāyikas say vyāpāravadasādhāranam Kāranam Karanm, and old Naiyayikas say that "Phalayogavyavacchinnam asadharanam Kārnam Karanam" In generally we can say prāmana is a process by which we reach an appropriate cognition or pramā. However Indian philosophers have not been able to reach consensus on the number of independent pramanas. In Caravaka philosophy one pramana has been accepted, Bouddhas have accepted two, Nyayas have come up with four, Bhatta Mimamsaka and Vedantins have accepted six pramanas.

In these pramanas, I want to research about upamana pramana.The title of my research is "Upamana Pramana in Classical Indian Tradition : A Critical Study".

Research Problem : According to Nyaya Philosophy pramanas are four kinds – pratyaksa, anumana, upamana, and sabda. According to mimamsa and Vedanta pramanas are six kinds - pratyaksa, anumana,upamana,sabda, arthapatti and anupalabdhi. Both Nyaya and mimamsaka accept that, Upamana is a distinct pramana. The term "upamana" has been translated in various ways as comparison, analogy, identification, knowledge by similarity or knowledge by assimilation etc. It is the knowledge derived from comparison and generally corresponds to analogy.we, in our day-to-day life, obtain many bits information just by comparing certain things and events. We also get knowledge by resemblance or similarity. We can give an example of upamana pramana as follows – a person is curious to know what kind of thing is ment by the term "Gavaya", he learns from a forester that "a Gavaya is like a cow", he happens to encounter an animal like a cow, he recalls the meaning of the forester's statement, he then has the cogtion that the animal before him is what is ment by the term "Gavaya". In this final cognition what is cognised is just the meaning realation

obtaining between the thing perceived and the term "Gavaya". This prama is called Upamiti and the karana of the Upamiti prama is called upamana pramana.

Those who accept upamana as a source of appropiate knowledge. Also accept that it is a valid knowledge (prama) can be obtain from it. The valid knowledge (prama) obtained from upamana pramana is called upamiti prama in Indian philosophy. There is unimity among them on this issue. However they diverge among themselves on the nature of such knowledge. For example, the definition (laksana) of upamiti is given in Nyaya philosophy differs from that is given in Mimamsa. Mimamsakas treat cases classified as upamiti by the Nyaya as special cases of anumiti. On the contrary case which are treated under upamiti by the mimamsakas are considered as case under the classification of sabda by the Nyaya system. So the question is why there is difference among the nature of upamiti prama when apparently the source of such knowledge (prama) is the same? Is there difference in the nature of prama concieved by different philosophers? So what is the nature of prama according to Nyaya and Mimamsa? Also the views of other Indian philosophers on these issue need to be investigated.

The founder of Nyaya philosophy Maharsi Gautama defined upamana pramana "prasiddhasadharmat sadhyasadhanamupamanam".

However the prachina (old) Naiyayika Bhasarbbajna did not accept the definition of the nature of upamana pramana given by Maharsi Gautama. But did he actually oppose the views given by Maharsi Gautama? If Vasarbbajna does not accept the upamana pramana as explicated by the founder of Nyaya system. Then what, according to him, is the definition of upamana pramana? So how do we show congruence among the views of these two experts? These issues will come under my research programme.

Purpose of the Research : Through this research I would try to address the questions that have been arised with respect to upamana pramana and upamiti prama. I would also try to resolve all the problems which are found in relation to these and would try to arrive at a acceptable conclusion.

Chapterisation : To write this research paper the following provable chapters would be followed:

1) Introduction
2) A brief Survey of the Concept of Prama and Pramana in Indian Tradition.
3) Upamana Pramana in Nyaya.
4) Upamana Pramana in Mimamsa.
5) Upamana Pramana in other Indian hilosophIcal System
6) Concluding remarks.

Method : In this research mainly the analytical method would be followed. Apart from this, the descriptive method may also be used. This research paper would be completed through the information and theories collected from primary, secondary texts, journals and various articles.

Conclusion : In this research paper I would try to analysis the observations put forward by various Indian philosophers regarding upamana pramana and upamiti prama and would try to arrive at an acceptable solution. Through this research paper a new perspective would be opened in Indian epistemology.

I feel that, in future research on upamana pramana would lead to new directions for the reader and researcher.

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